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REFORMED (DUTCH) CHURCH

OF

WALPACK. *Pa.*

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Historical Discourse

PREACHED

AT THE DEDICATION

OF THE

REFORMED CHURCH,

AT BUSHKILL, PENN.,

JANUARY 13th, 1874,

BY

REV. S. W. MILLS.

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W. A. L. P. A. R. K.

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## Historical Discourse.

Call to remembrance the former days.—HEBREWS x: 32.

It is often both seasonable and profitable for us to review the scenes and events of other days; to study the history of the past, that we may gather from it lessons of wisdom and instruction,—of admonition and encouragement. The contemplation by us as individuals, of the dealings of Divine Providence with us in the past history of our lives,—the calling up in review before the mind the mercies and blessings conferred upon us, and the sorrows and trials which we have endured, when properly done, will ever prove beneficial. We shall be led thereby to recognize the goodness and mercy of God toward us, as well as His faithfulness to His promises, and thus be led to repose our trust in Him for the future, no less than to be admonished of the evil of departing from Him. That which is true of individuals, is equally so of communities, whether associated together for religious or for secular and civil purposes. The deeds of patriotism and piety performed by those who have preceded us, and who have served their day and generation, may well be held in remembrance by us, and often recited for our own and others' good. This is so especially when those whose history we review have been placed in circumstances of great trial and hardship, and have been called to act their part amid dangers and perils, and under manifold discouragements and difficulties. With what feelings do we



recall the history of our patriot sires, in the perilous times in which their lot was cast ! In what veneration do we hold their memory ! What an influence for good may be produced by contemplating the toils and privations which they endured, the labors which they performed, and the sacrifices which they made to gain those liberties which they prized above property, ease, and even life itself ! Let us often dwell upon them in these times of degeneracy and national corruption. Let us recount them to our children and our children's children, that we and they may alike be inspired with loftier and purer motives and purposes, and prove ourselves their worthy descendants.

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The duty of recalling the past is repeatedly spoken of in Scripture. In Job viii : 8, we read : " Inquire, I pray thee, of the former age, and prepare thyself to the search of their fathers." In Deut. xxxii : 7, Moses says to the Israelites : " Remember the days of old, consider the years of many generations." In accordance with these is Paul's direction in the text, in which he seeks to encourage the Hebrew Christians under the trials which they were called to endure, by a consideration of those which they had already experienced. " Call to remembrance the former days." To this pleasant duty we address ourselves on this occasion of so much interest to this congregation. We ask your patient hearing while we recite as briefly as is consistent with the subject, the history of the Church of Walpack, from its first organization up to the present time.

The first settlers of the Neversink and Delaware valleys were Huguenots and Hollanders, who came from Kingston and Esopus, in Ulster County, N. Y. Their first place of settlement was at Peenpack, along the Neversink north of Huguenot, and about six or seven miles from Port Jervis. From this they passed down the Delaware, and subsequently some of them or of their descendants crossed over the Mountain to the Clove, near Deckertown. Deeply imbued with the principles and spirit of Protestantism—for which some of them had been

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compelled to flee from their native land,—they brought with them their religious privileges, and made early efforts to establish churches and schools.

**REV. GEORGE WILHELMUS MANCIUS.**

It is highly probable that as they came from Kingston and its vicinity, the Rev. George Wilhelmus Mancius, Pastor of the Reformed Dutch Church of Kingston, first preached the gospel here, and organized Churches both along the Neversink and Delaware. There were four churches organized probably about the same time—viz: Machackemech (now the Reformed Church at Port Jervis), Menissineck, at Montague, N. J., Walpech and Smithfield.\* The precise date of organization is not known, but the Minutes of Consistory date back to August 23d, 1737, at which time a Consistory was found in each Church performing Consistorial acts. Mancius, as it would seem from the record of baptisms in his handwriting, was in the habit of coming here regularly every six months (in May and November,) from their first organization, to preach and administer the sacraments, until they obtained a minister of their own. These Churches were without a Pastor for four years, when the

**REV. JOHANNES CASPARUS FRYENMOET†**

commenced his labors among them, June 1st, 1741, at the age of twenty, as appears from his own record in the Church Book. He was found among the people here, a lad of but sixteen, of much promise, who had been born in Switzerland, and had received a partial education for the ministry before coming to this country. In the scarcity of ministers they desire him to become their spiritual teacher. But he was only a boy, and

\*The names of the first three churches are variously spelled in the minutes—Machackemech, Magagkameck, Magagghamach, Mahaackanach; Menissineck, Manissineck, Menissing, Minisink; Walpech, Walpek, Walpack. Usually, for the first fifty years as in the first of each of these names,—and so we have written them.

†Until 1747 he wrote his name Fryenmuth, and after that invariably Fryenmoet. The first is supposed to be the Swiss, and the second the Holland mode of spelling it.



his education was very imperfect, while the regulations of the Churches were very strict in requiring an educated ministry. There were no schools of theology in this country to which he could be sent, and no ecclesiastical organizations to give the proper commission for the work of the ministry. What was to be done? In their poverty they raise among themselves the requisite means to send him to Holland to complete his studies, and to receive ordination from the Classis of Amsterdam, upon which the Reformed Churches in this country were then all dependent; and after four long years he comes back to them, true to his engagements, and commences his labors among them. What an honorable record is this for both minister and people! What an instance of liberality, of confidence and of hope on the part of the one, and of devotedness and fidelity on the part of the other! Their long years of patient waiting were well rewarded. Mr. F. proved a most acceptable, faithful and successful minister, and withal was remarkably genial and social in personal intercourse. His praise went abroad, not only through all this region, but other communities and Churches were charmed by him. Efforts were made at different times by various Churches to induce him to leave his field of labor here. A strong effort was made at the time of his leaving, to secure his services for the Churches of Harlingen, Readington, Raritan and North Branch, N. J. Only six months after his settlement here a call was made upon him by the Churches of Rochester, New Paltz, Shawangunk and Marbletown, which called forth a reply from the Consistories of Machackemech and Menissineck, which for its keenness and expressions of kind Christian feeling is seldom equalled, even at this day.\* The Church records kept by him are models of neatness and accuracy as well as of penmanship. His name was signed invariably in a monogram, very frequently placing under it his age at the time. The number of members received into the Church of Walpack during his ministry here I have been unable to ascertain; but in the Churches of Machackemech and Menissineck, whose records were kept in the

\*See Note A.





same book and recorded with great care, we find that ~~100~~<sup>110</sup> were added to the membership during the fifteen years of his labors.

During this period the Baptismal record of the same Churches shows that he baptized 504 children.

The district of country covered by his labors in these four Churches extended from Westbrookville at the north, to Smithfield (Shawnee,) at the south, being full fifty miles. Within this same district are now twenty ministers of different evangelical denominations engaged in the regular work of the ministry.

The amount of salary paid to Mr. F. by each of these four Churches was seventeen pounds and ten shillings, or seventy pounds in all, together with one hundred schepels of oats,—twenty-five schepels from each Church.\* The Churches of Machackemech, Menissinck and Walpeck were to pay the amount pledged by them in “New York Current Money,” and the church of Smithfield in “Proclamation Money.” It would seem from the Church Records of Machackemech and Menissinck that at first there was an explicit and definite agreement as to the money to be paid for his services, between these Churches and Mr. F. alone; for after he had declined the call from Rochester and the other Churches already referred to, the Consistories of these two Churches met together, January 7th, 1742, and resolved that “after the transit of this year, they should pay him yearly or every year the full amount of forty pounds in New York current money whenever he should marry,” (each Church paying at a specified time twenty pounds,) “but if he should continue unmarried, the two Churches should only pay the sum of thirty-five pounds.” The young minister took good care that the two Churches should pay the twenty pounds each, as appears from the following record, made by himself six months afterward, in which he was but setting a good example before his people, and at the same time proving that he possessed at least one of the qualifications of a Scriptural bishop, given by Paul in 1 Timothy, iii : 2. “Johannes Casparus Fryenmuth, young man, born in Switzerland, and

\*A schepel is three pecks.



Lena Van Edden, young woman, born in Nytsfield, were married with a License from Gouverneur Morris in Jersey, by Justice Abram Van Campen, 23d day of July, 1742.\*

Subsequently to the agreement made by these two Churches to pay the above amount of forty pounds, the Churches of Walpeck and Smithfield, in which he had been preaching all along, and where he had, we may suppose, received some compensation for his services, entered into the arrangement with them, when each of the four was to pay seventeen pounds and ten shillings. These four Consistories likewise at a later date (April 11th, 1748,) adopted the following minute bearing upon his support, and aiding him in his ministerial duties, which it must have required their combined wisdom and generosity to devise. No two of them were adequate to it. The minute reads thus : " They have authorized Cornelius Westbrook to purchase a horse for the Dominie, and pay for it from the Elders' chest in each Church, which horse the Dominie hath agreed to use exclusively for the Churches, except he will use it for himself." How well the arrangement regarding this Church horse worked we are left to conjecture from the following extract from the minutes just nine months later, signed by the minister himself : " I bind myself, by my signature, to the four united Churches of Smithfield, Walpeck, Menissinck and Machackemack, pursuant with an obligation of the same date with this, henceforth to serve the Churches with my own horse. For the establishment of this I subscribe my name. J. C. Fryenmoet."

Toward the close of Mr. F.'s ministry here the Church of Smithfield withdrew from the other three Churches. At a joint meeting of the Consistories of the four Churches, held December 23d, 1753, " the elders of the Church of Smithfield desired, with the consent of Rev. Mr. F., to be relieved of his services. Their request was granted through love by the other three Churches." No reason was assigned for the request :

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\*Van Campen was one of the first four Judges of Sussex County, New Jersey, appointed by the King of England in 1753.





but all appears to have been done with the utmost good feeling. There was a cause for it, as we think, to which allusion will be made hereafter.

Mr. F. remained here until August 12th, 1756, a period of fifteen years, when, on account of the Indian massacres in this region, he accepted a call from Kinderhook, Claverack, and Livingston Manor, where he remained for twenty-one years, and where his ministry, as well as here, was greatly blessed. He died about 1778, and was interred under the Kinderhook Church. The Van Burens and Kittles of the vicinity of Kinderhook were his descendants. It is said that Mr. F., according to the custom of his day, was the owner of slaves, as were also many of his parishioners.

#### MORAVIANS.

It may be a matter of some interest to state that at one time during Mr. F.'s ministry here, "the Moravian Brethren preached and kept a school in the upper valley of the Delaware, on the Jersey shore, in 1746 and 1747. In the former year Joseph Shaw was settled at Walpack. Here his wife deceased. He also preached at Minisink Church, and on one occasion, in April, 1747, had a promiscuous audience of Swedes, English, Scotch, Irish, Welsh, Germans, Walloons, Shawanese, Mohawks, Delawares and Catawbias."† In October, 1747, Mr. Shaw sailed as a missionary to St. Thomas, and was lost at sea during a violent gale. No further mention is made in their annals, of the efforts of the Moravians after this in the valley, and the field was evidently left to Mr. Fryenmoet.

#### REV. THOMAS ROMEYN.

After the departure of Rev. Mr. Fryenmoet the three Churches were vacant four years, when the Rev. Thomas Romeyn, of Long Island, accepted a call, September 6th, 1760. Mr. R. was born in Pompton, N. J., March 20th, 1729, studied under Goetelius and T. Frelinghuysen, sailed from New-York for Europe, April 11th, 1752, and was ordained by the Classis of Amsterdam, September 3d of the same year; ac-

†Moravian Annals.



cepted a call from Success, Newtown, Oyster Bay and Jamaica, on Long Island, November 10th, 1752, where he remained until coming here in 1760. But little is known of his ministry among these Churches, and such is the character of the Church Records kept by him that it is well nigh impossible to learn anything from them. His wretched, illegible penmanship, contrasts strikingly with the neat, distinct hand of his predecessor. He was a quiet, peaceable man, devoted to his work, and served the churches faithfully. Soon after his settlement here, Mr. R. commenced preaching a part of the time in Wantage, N. J. (at the Clove), which resulted at length in the organization of a Reformed Dutch Church there in 1788, during Mr. Van Benschoten's ministry. While here Mr. R. married for his second wife, Susan Van Campen, daughter of Col. Ab'm. Van Campen, of Pahaquarry. He remained in Charge of the churches here twelve years, until 1772, when he became the Pastor of the Reformed Dutch Church of Caughnawaga, Montgomery County, N. Y., and continued such for twenty-one years, when he was by ill health compelled to resign his charge, and where he also died, October 22d, 1794.

Three of Mr. R.'s sons entered the ministry of the Reformed Dutch Church, while a fourth died in the course of preparation for it. A grandson (James,) was for many years one of the most able and learned ministers in our denomination, while a great-grandson (Theodore B.,) is at the present time the highly esteemed Pastor of the First Reformed Church in Hackensack, N. J. It is a most gratifying testimonial that is thus furnished to the faith and piety of the second Pastor of these Churches of the Delaware, that while comparatively little is known of his labors here, his descendants to the third and fourth generation have been engaged in preaching in the Church of their fathers the same blessed gospel proclaimed by him.

After Mr. R. left there was an interval of about thirteen years during which these churches were without any regular services, owing chiefly to the troubled state of the country preceding and during the Revolutionary war. Occasional sup-







plies broke to them the bread of life, among whom we find on the church-book the names of Jacob R. Hardenbergh, V. D. M., and Benjamin DuBois, V. D. M., in 1784.

REV. ELIAS VAN BENSCHOTEN.

On May 11th, 1785, a call was given to the Rev. Elias Van-Benschoten (Van Bunschooten he usually wrote it), by the three Churches of Machackemech, Menissineck and Walpack. The call was accepted July 9th, and he was installed August 28th, by Rev. Dr. Jacob R. Hardenbergh, of Marbletown, Ulster County, N. Y. The name of no minister in our Church, dead or living, is so generally known in it. Mr. V. B. was born at New Hackensack, Dutchess Co., N. Y., October 26th, 1738. Graduating from Princeton College in 1768, he studied Theology with Dr. Hermanns Meyer, of Kingston, N. Y., as appears from a receipt in the Dutch language, signed by him, October 7th, 1772, acknowledging the payment in full of three pounds, two shillings and sixpence, for board and tuition. If this receipt covered the entire term of study, "either the course of study (it has been well said,) was not very extended, or provisions for both mind and body were marvelously cheap in the good old times." Mr. V. B. was first settled at Shaghticoke, on the Hudson, for twelve years until coming here. About two years after commencing his ministry here, application was made to the Classis of New Brunswick for the organization of a Reformed Dutch Church at the Clove, near Deckertown, which was effected the succeeding year.† Subsequent to this his services were divided between that Church and the Churches on the Delaware, and at length, in 1792, he removed to the Clove, though still serving the Churches here until 1799, or 1800. He continued to labor at the Clove (where he owned a farm and mill,) with much acceptance and success, until 1812, when, on account of his advanced age (74), he gave up his charge. Three years later, (January 10th, 1815,) after a lingering and painful illness, he closed his useful life on earth, and entered upon his reward. A few years subsequent to his death, his remains were taken

†See Note B.



up by the General Synod from their place of interment at the Clove, and removed to New Brunswick, N. J., and laid by the side of those of many of the Professors of the College, and of the Theological Seminary. Dr. McClure says : " A very singular event took place at the exhumation of his remains. Among those attracted to the spot was a very respectable woman who had grown up under his ministry. When she saw the coffin raised the thoughts of his sermons and more private instructions rushed upon her with overpowering force. Filled with anguish of spirit, under convictions of the light she had sinned against while enjoying his teachings, she sank exhausted by the tumult of her feelings. Months passed in deep anxiety before she found peace in believing."

Possessed of some eccentricities, Mr. V. B. had likewise many excellencies, and was held in high esteem. He was remarkable for his frugality, for his strict and exact honesty in business transactions\* (which is too often confounded with meanness), and for abstemiousness in his manner of living. His services were conducted in either the Dutch or English language, as occasion required ; and the Church Records kept by him show entries in both languages, but principally the former. His preaching was highly Scriptural and evangelical, was clear and distinct in argument, and his messages delivered with an earnest and holy unction. His labors were much blessed. There are those still living in our valley who retain a distinct recollection of him,—of his person, his appearance, his manners and his services. In 1814, at the suggestion of Rev. Dr. Livingston, Professor of Theology at New Brunswick, and a warm personal friend, he made what was in that day a munificent gift, of \$14,640 (increased at his death to \$17,000), to the Trustees of Queen's (now Rutgers') College, the income of which was to be applied to the support of young

\*Whether in paying or receiving money, he insisted upon the last cent. As an instance of this, we are told that in settling with a customer at his mill, upon finding that he owed him THREE CENTS, he went to his house for the coppers, against the earnest remonstrance of the man for troubling himself about such a trifle. Finding him gone upon his return, he sent a negro in chase, who followed him seven miles until he overtook and paid him.





men desiring to preach the Gospel. This fund now amounts to over \$20,000, and has already educated over one hundred and twenty-five ministers in our Church, besides inciting many others to like gifts. For sixty years it has been doing its blessed work, in furnishing the Churches at home with those who break to them the bread of life, as well as in sending missionaries to India and China, and the islands of the sea. It has been said that this was the first gift of the kind for theological education in our country.

Mr. V. B. was the last minister who served these three churches jointly, Menissinek and Machackemech from this time until 1838, uniting together in one minister.

REV. JAMES G. FORCE.

Walpack remained vacant until November 15th, 1808, when their fourth minister, Rev. James G. Force, commenced his labors among them as Stated Supply. He continued as such for three years, until November 17th, 1811, when he was installed Pastor by Rev. John M. Van Harlingen. In connection with Walpack, Mr. F. preached at Hardwick, a township in Warren County, N. J., from 1811 until 1816, and at one time supplied for several months the Presbyterian Church of Smithfield. He remained the Pastor of this Church until 1827, the entire period of his services being about nineteen years. At the beginning of his ministry there were but twenty-six persons in communion with the Church. From 1812 until 1827, sixty-two were received into connection with it by confession and certificate. Mr. F. is said to have had a good mind, and to have been an instructive and profitable preacher. He was a kind hearted, benevolent man, and very pleasant and friendly in intercourse. He had one quite serious failing in connection with his public services, not altogether in accordance with his name,—a want of punctuality in commencing his services. He was seldom at the place of worship in time. His habit in this regard was a matter of general complaint. His ministry however was in the main useful, though a modest and unassuming man. His successor speaks of him as “a faithful and able preacher of the Gospel, who labored with ac-





ceptance and success until a few years before he gave up his call," and who was "conspicuous for his great humility." After resigning his call, in 1827, he lived in Sandyston, without charge, until his death in July, 1851, aged 84 years. His remains were interred in the Church Burying Yard at Peters' Valley, though, shameful to say, no stone of any description marks the spot where this servant of God was laid.

The Church of Walpack, as also those of Minisink and Mahackamach, when Mr. F. commenced his labors here, and for five or six years subsequently, appears to have been in a very feeble and discouraging condition. The whole region seems to have been a missionary field; and hence the Classis of New Brunswick in 1813 applied to General Synod for aid to support the Gospel on the Delaware. "These Churches," says the Report of Synod, "are in a destitute state, and require more service than the Classis can afford them. If a suitable character could be found to visit these societies, the Churches above mentioned might be soon placed in a situation to support at least one minister, and new churches be organized."

#### NEW CHURCH ORGANIZATION.

In 1827 serious divisions arose in the Church, growing out of some cases of discipline, which greatly affected its prosperity. To such an extent did these proceed that the Classis of New Brunswick advised the organization of a new Church. This was accordingly effected June 14th, 1827, by the Rev. Mr. Elting, who had been appointed by the Classis for that purpose. The new organization bore the name of the Lower Dutch Reformed Church of Walpack. John Depue, Jr., and Nathaniel Eldridge were chosen Elders. One month later, July 14th and 15th, seventeen members were received by the Consistory upon confession, and seven from the old Church, the Rev. I. S. Demund, a Missionary of Classis, being present, preaching and administering the ordinances of Baptism and the Lord's Supper. From records made at the time, it appears that the new Church were greatly encouraged, feeling that the blessing of the Lord was evidently resting upon them. On August 18th the Consistory of the old Church met, there be-





ing present with them, by invitation, the new Consistory and the Rev. Mr. Demund, when the action respecting the discipline of certain members was reconsidered, and they were restored to their former standing in the Church. It was then further proposed to request the Classis to rescind their action in organizing the new Church, and "that the two Consistories and congregations be united in one, to be called as heretofore, the Reformed Dutch Church of Walpack." This was unanimously adopted, at a subsequent meeting, held September 11th. Thus, after three months, the new organization ceased to exist.

#### REV. ISAAC S. DEMUND

Was the fifth Pastor of the Church of Walpack. Having given up teaching a classical school, at Somerville, N. J., and entered the ministry in the Presbyterian Church,—after preaching a short time at Sandusky and Milan, in Ohio, and at Milford below Easton and Kingwood, he united with the Classis of New Brunswick, and was appointed by them to labor here as a Missionary. After a few months service in this capacity (which resulted in healing the breach just referred to), a call was given to him October 15th, 1827, and on December 2d he was installed Pastor, by Rev. Richard D. Van Kleek, of Raritan, N. J. The condition of the Church at the time of his coming was not the most inviting. Serious divisions had existed. The field of labor was large. The only house of worship was at Flatbrookville. The other places of service were school houses, at Peters' Valley, and at Pleasant Valley, the Academy at Dingman's Ferry, at Hornbeck's barn, near his tavern, at the house of a Mr. Schoonover, at Bushkill, and at Peters' Tavern. Mr. D. was a man of much ability, and of great prudence, and was highly esteemed among the people, although his ministry here was of brief duration. In a recent letter he says: "Unanimity and good will prevailed in the congregation during the time I remained, and I could easily have been retained, had measures been taken to make me comfortable as to temporal matters, such as furnishing a parsonage, etc." He resigned his call June 13th, 1829, after two years



labors. Mr. D. is still living at Coxsackie, N. Y., in advanced years, having been engaged in the active duties of the ministry until within a recent date, and having occupied several important charges.

#### REV. DAVID CUSHING.

After Mr. Demund left, the Rev. David Cushing preached here a few months, as Stated Supply, commencing his labors the last of October, 1831. Mr. C. is spoken of in the minutes of Consistory as a candidate under the care of the Classis of Philadelphia, who had been recommended to them by the Classis of New Brunswick. He is said to have been somewhat erratic in his views, and peculiar in his ways. Both his coming and departure were singular. He was nevertheless a man of decided ability and of great power, whose preaching never failed to produce a marked impression upon his audience. Aside from his preaching, he was a match for any of his parishioners at chopping timber in the woods, or threshing in the barn, in both of which he frequently indulged. Many amusing anecdotes are told of him. We mention one connected with his preaching. On one occasion he quoted in the course of his sermon the words, "Pay that thou owest," pointing at the same time with his finger in a very emphatic manner, as he was wont, toward the audience. As he commented upon the importance of fulfilling one's promises, the truth presented and the pointed finger so wrought upon one of his hearers, who had been somewhat negligent in the matter referred to, that after the service he went to one of his neighbors who was present, and said, "I will bring you that load of boards tomorrow," which he did. Good preaching, that. Mr. C. left very suddenly in the summer of 1832, no one knowing why.

#### REVIVAL OF 1832.

During the brief stay of Mr. Cushing a deep religious interest began to manifest itself in the congregation. Large numbers gathered to hear the Word preached, and listened to it with earnest attention. The interest increased after his departure. Immediately upon his leaving, the officers of the





Church seemed to waken up to a sense of the responsibilities resting upon them. They passed a resolution "that each member of the Consistory erect a family altar in his house, and plead with God morning and evening for the outpouring of His Holy Spirit upon us and upon our Church, and that we meet statedly together the first Monday of every month, for prayer and supplication." They also resolved to visit the congregation, going from house to house, to talk and pray with the people. One reason for this, in addition to the existing religious interest, Mr. Demund says, is the fact that the cholera was on its way around the world, and had already reached our country, producing no little fear and alarm. Prominent among those who engaged in this good work, were John Nyce, Esq., George W. Nyce, Jacob Westbrook, and Daniel Schoonover. These were greatly assisted by that faithful and devoted minister, Rev. C. C. Elting, of Port Jervis, who spent days and weeks in preaching and laboring among the people. The result was a remarkable and extensive work of grace, and the addition to the Church, in the spring of 1832, of one hundred and four members upon confession, and eight by certificate. Some marked cases of conversion are spoken of in connection with it; one being that of a man eighty years of age, and another that of a tavern-keeper.

#### REV. GARRET C. SCHENCK

Succeeded Mr. Cushing, after a little more than a year. Having just been licensed by the Classis of New Brunswick, he was appointed by them in October, 1833, to preach here, and spent three Sabbaths with the people. On November 25th a call was given to him, and on February 23d, 1834, he commenced his labors, preaching on that rainy Sabbath at Peters' Valley, and at Dingman's Ferry. His ordination and installation took place six weeks later, April 6th, 1834, in the Church at Bushkill, then recently erected. Dr. Samuel A. Van Vranken preached the ordination sermon, from 1st Corinthians, 1: 21. Dr. Jacob C. Sears gave the charge to the Pastor, and Rev. C. C. Elting the charge to the people. Mr. Schenck is spoken of by some of your number as a "modest and unas-





sunning but good young man, devoted to his work, and much esteemed while here." He speaks himself of his coming here "at the close of a gracious revival, and at a time when the people more than in time past appreciated the means of grace, and their attendance on them was good. My labors were arduous, yet with the confidence and sustaining help of the people I could engage in the work cheerfully until circumstances beyond my control constrained me to leave." He left in March, 1835, the Consistory placing on their book this minute: "Resolved, That neither the Consistory or the people wish a dissolution; yet the Consistory will throw no obstacle in the way of their Pastor's wishes." During his ministry twelve persons were received upon confession, and two by certificate. Mr. S. is still living, at Marlborough, N. J., without charge. Immediately after Mr. S. left, the relations of the Church were changed from the Classis of New Brunswick to the Classis of Orange, the subject of transfer having been considered in Consistory previous to his leaving: at first unfavorably, but the Classis of New Brunswick favored the change, and it was consummated by General Synod in June, 1835.

#### REV. JAMES B. HYNDSHAW

Was the next Pastor. Connected with the Presbytery of Newton, a call was given to him by the Consistory, October 26th, 1835. He was installed January 17th, 1836, the installation having been postponed from January 13th to 17th (although the Committee of Classis were on hand), on account of a severe snow storm, four feet in depth, which rendered all travel impossible for two or three days. Rev. J. B. Ten Eyck preached the installation sermon, and read the form, and Rev. S. Van Vechten delivered the charge to both Pastor and people, the services being held in the Delaware Academy. Mr. H. remained until October 9th, 1839, when he resigned his call to become Principal of the Academy at Stroudsburg. He is said to have been "a sound, orthodox minister, faithful in his charge and highly respected, but whose labors were not abundantly blessed."





## REV. ROBERT PITTS.

As we come now to a time, the scenes and events of which are familiar to most, we shall be more brief in our notice of them. After Mr. Hyndshaw's departure the Church remained vacant, with the exception of occasional supplies, for a year and a half, when the Rev. Robert Pitts, a Licentiate of the Classis of Orange, commenced his labors as Stated Supply, in April, 1841, and remained as such until 1860, a period of about 19 years. Mr. P. continued his ministrations longer than any of his predecessors, except Rev. Mr. Force. During his ministry there were added to the membership of the Church one hundred and fifteen persons upon confession, and seventeen by certificate.

## UPPER AND LOWER WALPACK.

The time had now come when a change was to be made having an important bearing upon the interests of the Church and the cause of religion here. The wide extent of territory embraced in this Pastoral Charge, and the difficulty of reaching it, in consequence of its being divided by the Delaware running through its entire length,—at times impassable, and at any time attended with inconvenience in crossing, had long been felt to be serious obstacles to the prosperity of the Church, and as laying upon her ministers burdens which they were not able to bear. The Classis of Orange had considered this matter some years before, as appears from the minutes of a meeting held October 17th, 1855, when the following resolution was passed :

"RESOLVED, That the Committee on Missions be directed to visit the Church of Walpack, and confer with the Minister, Consistory and people, on the propriety and expediency of dividing that Church, with a view to the settlement of two Pastors."

This change was now effected, and henceforth we read of Upper Walpack, with the two congregations at Dingman's Ferry and Peters' Valley ; and Lower Walpack, with the two congregations at Bushkill and Walpack. There is however but one organization for the whole, which is known either to our ecclesiastical or civil courts—viz : the Church of Walpack, with its one Consistory for the four congregations.

Charles L. Albright



**REV. ALEXANDER MCWILLIAM**

was the first minister for Lower Walpack, under this new arrangement. He commenced his services in the fall of 1860, and after preaching as Stated Supply six months, was installed Pastor June 1st, 1861, in the Church at Bushkill, Rev. S. W. Mills presiding and reading the form, Rev. William Hamilton preaching the sermon, Rev. C. Scott assisting in the devotional exercises. After nearly ten years of faithful and successful ministerial labor, the Pastoral relation was dissolved May 17th, 1870, a call having been accepted by Mr. McWilliam from the Reformed (Dutch) Church of East Millstone, N. J. During his ministry here there were received into the communion of the Church one hundred and two persons, ninety-one of whom were upon confession. In the early part of it the present parsonage was erected, the lot for which was given by Charles R. Peters, deceased.

**REV. JOHN F. SHAW,**

The present Pastor, commenced his labors October 1st, 1870, and was installed December 8th, of the same year. Rev. G. S. Garretson presided and read the form for installation, and Rev. R. H. Beattie, D. D., preached the sermon.

**REV. NATHAN W. JONES**

Was the first minister of Upper Walpack, under the new arrangement, referred to above. He commenced preaching as Stated Supply in the fall of 1861, and remained about one year.

**REV. GILBERT S. GARRETSON,**

The present Pastor, succeeded him, commencing his services about the middle of March, 1863. He was ordained and installed Pastor May 19th, 1863, in the Church at Peters' Valley. Rev. J. DuBois presided and read the form for installation, and Rev. G. H. Mandeville preached the sermon, from 1st Cor. iii : 9.

Our line of remark thus far has been confined to the Ministry. But the history of the Church would not be complete without an account of the Church edifices erected. Before we







speak of these, however, there is one item connected with the history which deserves a passing notice.

#### CHURCH FARM.

The Church has, whether fortunately or unfortunately, been the owner of large real estate. "Whether fortunately or unfortunately," we say. Not a few of the wisest and best men of our day, both in the Church and out of it, entertain serious doubts whether the possession of property by a Church, the income of which is appropriated to its maintenance, is upon the whole, of advantage to it. We prize most that which costs us something, and hence those who pay for their religious privileges usually value them most, and observe them more regularly. Such possessions tend to repress a spirit of liberality among the people, and it is not unfrequently the case that it is quite as difficult to raise money for regular Church purposes in such Churches as in others; while for objects of pure benevolence they often fall sadly behind Churches having no such endowments. Nevertheless, the Church of Walpack have had a Church farm. They came by it lawfully, and have used it honestly and properly, for the purpose for which it was given. And it may be well doubted whether, if any Church now had a like offer made to it, there would be grace enough in it to refuse the proffered boon. The Church came by the farm as follows: On May 24th, 1752, James Alexander,\* by direction of the Council of Proprietors of the Eastern Division of New Jersey, conveyed to Abraham Van Campen and Garret Brink, for the use of the Reformed Dutch Church of Walpack and Pahaquarry, *professing the doctrines of Calvin*, two hundred and ten acres in Sandyston, the consideration being "sixpence and a pint of spring water yearly," from the large spring on the premises, "if demanded." The income from this farm was to be devoted to the support of the preaching of the Gospel in the Church. Twenty-five acres of it were sold some years ago to William L. Bevans. On December 4th, 1869, the balance of one hundred and eighty-five acres was sold, by an Act of the New Jersey Legislature, to John

\*See Note C.



Schooley, for \$12,506,—the proceeds of sale to be safely invested, and the income to be appropriated to the support of the Church, according to the terms of the gift.

#### SMITHFIELD CHURCH.

Before speaking of the Church edifices in the bounds of the Walpack Church, it may not be amiss to allude to the Old Log Church, in which the Smithfield congregation first worshiped. This was, so far as we can learn, the first house of worship of any description erected in this region of country. It was built below the "Mine Holes," on the Pennsylvania side of the Delaware, opposite Tock's Island, near the present village of Shawnee. It is supposed to have been built about the year 1725. It was probably erected for the purpose of furnishing the miners, and those settled around the mines, with a place for holding religious services, while as yet there was no Church organization. When the Smithfield Church was organized (in 1737), they worshiped in this Log Church, and for many years subsequently. The evidence, from the original Records of the Reformed Dutch Churches of Machackemeck and Menissineck, during the ministry of Fryenmoet, is clear and decisive that this Smithfield Church was Reformed Dutch, with its Consistory composed of Elders and Deacons, the names of whom from time to time are recorded in that Book, with those of the three other Churches. We deem it important to state this, since the intimation has been made, in a History of the Shawnee Presbyterian Church,\* that this was originally a Presbyterian Church; they are called "Dutch Presbyterians," i. e., Presbyterians using the Dutch language. The Church first in existence known as the Smithfield Church, at what is now called Shawnee, was Reformed Dutch, and not Presbyterian. Its officers signed the "Act of Subordination to the Classis of Amsterdam," with those of the other three Churches, April 19th, 1746. Their names were, Benjamin Depuy and Moses Depuy, Elders, and Lambert Brynck and James Hyndshaw, Deacons.

\*By Rev. J. Kirby Davis.





This Church continued in connection with the other three Churches in enjoying the services of the same minister, as before remarked, until about the year 1753, when it withdrew. The cause leading to this withdrawal was probably the erection of a "Presbyterian Meeting-House" there in 1752, the land for which had been given by William Allen, in 1750. This was a stone building (known for many years as the Old Stone Church), and after its erection was occupied by various denominations—Presbyterians, Reformed Dutch, and Lutherans. Notwithstanding the Smithfield Dutch Church withdrew from the other three Churches, still Fryenmoet and Romeyn both preached from time to time in this Stone Church which was now used by the Dutch congregation, on account of the Old Log Church having become unfit for use. But while the Presbyterians had their house of worship, it appears from the History by Mr. Davis, just referred to, that there was no organization of a Presbyterian Church until in 1816, when the Rev. John Boyd ordained the first Elders. Previous to this, Presbyterian ministers preached here occasionally to those preferring that form of worship and organization. Meantime the Reformed Dutch Church, having no house of worship of its own, declined and at length died out, and those who had been connected with it fell in with the Presbyterian Church when its organization was effected.

#### WALPACK CHURCHES.

The first house of worship erected within the bounds of the Walpack Church was built on the site occupied by the present edifice, near Flatbrookville. The original deed for the ground (containing four acres,) upon which the church was erected, was made by Thomas Brink and Nicholas Schoonhoven, in the tenth year of His Majesty, King George, February 1st, 1737.\* This deed was never recorded, and on February 26th, 1744, another genuine deed was made and recorded, a note of which is made on the Church Records. The Church edifice was erected prior to 1741 (though its exact date is not known), since Rev. Mr. Fryenmoet was preaching in it at that time,

\*See Note D.



In this Church Mr. F. numbered among his hearers, on Sabbath, August 12th, 1742, Count Zinzendorf, the great Moravian Apostle, who, with his daughter Benigna, was on his way from Bethlehem, Pa., to Shecomoco, Ulster County, N. Y. He speaks of Mr. F. in his journal, as "the well known Casper from Zurich, a well meaning man, and efficient for good in his denomination. The heat," he says, "was overpowering, and we were compelled to listen to two sermons, which wearied us." Between sermons, "in order to avoid being drawn into religious controversy, we went into the woods and read Josephus." The second Church edifice of Walpack was built a half-mile further up the river road, near where Jacob Smith now lives. The date of its erection is unknown, but it was previous to 1800. In this building Rev. Mr. Van Ben-Schoten and Rev. Mr. Force preached. It was occupied down to 1816, when the third edifice was erected, on the original foundation, and where the present Church edifice stands. This third building was erected by the German Reformed people, who had at this time a Church organization there. It was dedicated on Christmas day (1819), the services being conducted in both German and English. After its erection, the Reformed Dutch congregation, on account of their own building having become old and dilapidated, purchased one half of the edifice built by the Germans. The two congregations occupied it on alternate Sabbaths. Soon after the commencement of Mr. Pitts' labors, the members of the German Church mainly united with the Reformed Dutch Church. The Germans however continued to own a half interest in it so long as it stood. Two Trustees were chosen biennially, to have charge of their half of the building.

The fourth and present house of worship was built in 1855, at a cost of \$1,441. The Corner Stone was laid by Rev. R. Pitts, August 22d, 1855, who preached a sermon from Isaiah xxviii, 16. It was dedicated December 20th, of the same year, when Rev. D. A. Jones, of Montague, preached from Psalms xlv, 17. Calvin Decker, Jonas Smith, **Henry** J. Bunnell







and Jonas H. Smith, were the Building Committee, and Reuben Shupe the Contractor.

#### SHAPANACK CHURCH.

**2033009**

We pass up the river from Flatbrookville a few miles, until we come to what was called the Shapanack Church, another of the houses of worship occupied by a portion of the Walpack congregation. This was located on the line of the old "Mine Road,"\* leading from Kingston to the Copper Mines in Pahaquarry, about three miles below Peters' Valley, near the old Shapanack Burying Ground, opposite the island of the same name in the Delaware River, and close by the side of the river road, on the farm now owned and occupied by the heirs of Moses Hull, deceased. The ground on which it stood was donated by Col. John Rosecrans, for this purpose, and was to revert back when no longer used for Church purposes. The old Shapanack Fort was only a few hundred yards distant from the Church, and formed part of Col. R's dwelling, and was used to protect settlers against Indian and Tory incursions from across the river. The exact date of the erection of the Church is not known, but it is supposed to have been before the Revolutionary war, during the Pastorate of Rev. Mr. Romeyn. It was built of logs, and was octagonal in form. Some of the logs, and even the foundation, were to be seen less than a dozen years since. The building was abandoned about fifty years ago, and a stone edifice erected at Peters' Valley, which was used both as a Church and a school house. In this the people worshiped for about twenty years, during the ministry of Rev. Mr. Force. In the year 1838 it was sold by the Sheriff, and was purchased by Robert Stoll, and has since been used as a Store and Tavern. Among the sad reflections that arise in the mind in tracing such a history as the present, is the fact that a building reared by pious hands for holy purposes, where the Gospel of Christ was proclaimed and souls fitted for heaven, should be devoted to dispensing intoxicating drinks and hurrying men to perdition; and the further fact that the grandson of the man of God who here ministered in holy things,

\*See Note E.



should at this moment be occupying a murderer's cell in Morristown.

#### **PETERS' VALLEY CHURCH.**

The present Church edifice at Peters' Valley, was erected in 1838, during the ministry of the Rev. Mr. Hyndshaw, at a cost of \$1,400. The Contractor was James C. Bevans. It was dedicated on the last Thursday in May, 1839. A subscription had been circulated in 1836, to erect a house of worship near the bridge at Dingman's Ferry, on the Jersey side, but being found insufficient was abandoned; and on May 1st, 1837, the Consistory resolved to circulate another subscription to build one at Peters' Valley, which was accomplished the succeeding year.

#### **CHURCH AT DINGMAN'S FERRY.**

The first movement toward erecting a Church edifice at Dingman's Ferry, Pa., which we find on record, was on May 1st 1837, when, jointly with the effort to build one at Peters' Valley, the Consistory resolved to circulate a subscription for the same purpose in Pennsylvania. What came of the effort we do not know, except that no Church was then built. So far as any notice of the matter upon the minutes of Consistory is concerned, the project seems to have slept for over twelve years, when on November 12th, 1849, it was revived, and Rev. R. Pitts and John I. Westbrook were appointed to raise money for this purpose. The effort was successful, and the Church was erected in 1850, at a cost of \$1,300. The Building Committee consisted of John I. Westbrook, Albert S. Stoll, and John Van Gorden. The Contractor was W. F. Brodhead.

#### **CHURCH EDIFICES AT BUSHKILL.**

The first Church edifice erected for the congregation worshipping at Bushkill, was in 1832 (the year of the great revival), the lot for which was given by Henry Peters. It was commenced in the spring of 1832, while the Rev. David Cushing was preaching here, and completed in 1833. It is said to have been owing in no small degree to his efforts that the people here were furnished with a house of worship. With his own hands







he assisted in cutting timber for the frame, on the Church farm in Sandyston, and helped to raft it down the river to its place of destination. There are those with you who have a distinct recollection of him with his ox-team carting materials for the house of God. Out of the small sum of \$90 received for his services here, he subscribed and paid \$50 towards the erection of the Church. Its cost was a little over \$2,000. The Building Committee were Simeon Schoonover, John M. Heller and James Nyce. It has served its purpose well during a period of forty years, and has given place to the more attractive, commodious and comfortable structure, now to be dedicated to the worship of the Triune Jehovah. And as of old it was said—"The glory of the latter house shall be greater than that of the former," so may it be said now in the highest and truest sense. While in material things,—in comeliness and beauty, and external adorning,—this building excels that which preceded it, so may it be in spiritual things. The first sanctuary here was reared, as we have seen, during a season of great religious interest in this community; when many were found entering into the kingdom of heaven. So may it be now, even in a much larger measure. May the promise made to God's people of old, in connection with the building of the second temple, be fulfilled anew to this congregation, at the completion of this second sanctuary—"From this day will I bless you." May the Holy Spirit descend with divine and quickening power upon both Pastor and people,—crowning the labor of their hands with His rich blessing and grace; making them joyful in this house of prayer; causing them to see His glory upon Zion, in beholding multitudes born here to a new and heavenly life—walking before God in the beauties of holiness, and at length translated to worship Him in the Heavenly Temple.\*

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\*Note F.



## APPENDIX.

### NOTE A.

(PAGE 6)

The subjoined letter to the Churches of Rochester, &c., though published before, may be new to many who read this Discourse, and is well worthy of preservation. It is as follows :

MANISSINCK, 6th day of Dec., 1741.

*To the Reverend Consistory of Rochester, Greeting :*

We, your servants, have heard and understood that you have corresponded with our Minister, and have so far proceeded as to send him a call, purposing by much money to take him from us. But the Lord, who has thus far caused your acts of supplanting to fail, will further direct them to a good end. We feel ourselves bound to obey the command of the Savior—"Do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that persecute you." We therefore will deal with you hereafter as we have before—doing you good. You do not thank us for his service among you. You are bold enough to say that he has eight free Sabbaths in each year; which is as true as the words of the Devil to Eve—"You shall not surely die." If you desire then to have our Minister four or six times in the year, we will by no means refuse you, but will leave it to our Minister to arrange the compensation with you. And if this cannot prevent the execution of your unjust purpose, and the Lord is pleased to use you as a rod for our chastisement, we will view it as coming from the hand of the Lord, and comfort ourselves with the gracious language of Paul, Heb. xii: "Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth." If it please the Lord to permit you to deprive us of our Minister, then we hope that your consciences will not be so seared as to take away a part of our living, being the sum of £125, 12s., 6d.\* Should this however be the case, we shall not hesitate to give the matter into the hands of the worldly Judge. We expect an answer to this communication, which we conclude with the wish that the grace of the

\*Supposed to be money paid by them for his education.







Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God the Father, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, remain with you to a blessed eternity. Amen. We remain your undersigned servants.

JAN KORTRECHT,  
JAN VAN VLIEDT,  
ABRAHAM VAN CAMP,  
WILLIAM COOL.

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#### NOTE B.

(PAGE 11.)

The following is an extract from a Petition presented to the Classis of New Brunswick, signed by fifty-eight inhabitants of the Clove, dated August 21, 1787 :

"Our ancestors, a few in number, who formerly belonged to the Low Dutch Reformed Church, settled our country about forty years since. During part of that time the Rev. Thomas Romine, by permission of his Church-Council and people of the Minisinks, preached some of his time amongst us. By his leaving there, we again became destitute, till the Rev. Mr. Bunschooten was installed in Minisinks congregations, who labored some time amongst us ; and whose labor, to appearance, has been attended with the blessings of God, so as we have upwards of thirty communicant members amongst us."

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#### NOTE C.

(PAGE 21.)

James Alexander was a native of Scotland, and owing to the active part he took in favor of the "Pretender," he came to America in 1715, in company with William Smith, who was afterwards Chief Justice of New York. Having served as an officer of engineers in his native country, he was made Surveyor-General of New Jersey and New York, in 1718. He also studied law, and gained an eminence in his profession. His residence was in New York city, where he died April 2d, 1756. He was the father of William Alexander, commonly called "Lord Stirling." William Livingston, who was Governor of New Jersey during the Revolution, was a law student under him. He, with Franklin and others, founded the American Philosophical Society. His transactions in New Jer-



sey were principally in the capacity of agent, or attorney, for the Council of Proprietors of East New Jersey, of which he was one; and it was in that capacity that he conveyed this farm to the Church of Walpack. Sedgwick, in his life of Wm. Livingston, speaks of him as "at the head of his profession" as a lawyer, and "highly distinguished in his day."

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#### NOTE D.

(PAGE 23.)

The following is an exact copy of the first deed for the lot on which the Walpack Church stands,—dated February 1st, 1737 :

"To all Christian people to whom these prances Shall Com Know ye that we thomas Brink an nicklas Schoonhovon of Wallpack in the County of hunderton Yeoman Know yea that we Do Send gre-tten Know yea that we thomas Brink an nicklas Schoonhovon that we have an do this Give gran an by these prances do give grant for the Love good will and a fexshans which we do Bair to wards the inhabts of Wallpack an the near inhabitons thar a bout an we do give an grant unto the inhabitons above Riten all an Sigeler that Lot or parsal of Land Lying an Sittn an beinge in Wallpack But-ting Bounding as follngs Beging at the nothwess Corner of the Bur-ryyard at a Red oak tree markt with three notches on the sides Runing from thence Souerle to a wite oak tree mark with three noches Runing along to a Black oak tree markt with three notches a corner tre then Runing easterle to a corner a Black oak markited with three notches from thenc Northerle to a Black oak Corner tree market on two sides with three notches from thence to the foust Stashon Containing about fore aakers moreso or Los to Gether with all the Rites titls intrest clames and Demands what so ever we now have or which any or ever of our heirs Executors Administors or a Signs may hear after have of or to the Said Granted Primises or any part there of have and to hold the Said Peece or Lot of Land unto the above Riten inhabitines them their ares asines Execters a lmini without any maner of Conditionas we the said thomas Brink and nickles Schoonhovon have fully freely and absolutly and for-ever own accord Set and Put in furdre testimony in witness whareof we have hear unto Set our hands and Seals this fust Day febery in this tenth year of his magesty King George an anodomney one







thousand Seven hundred an thirty Seven Sined Sealed Witness in  
the presence of us

PETER VANAUKEN  
ADAM DINGMANSE  
BENJN SMYTH

THOMAS <sup>his</sup>  
<sub>mark</sub> X BRINK (L. S.)  
NICKLAS <sup>his</sup>  
<sub>mark</sub> X SCHOONHOVAN (L. S.)

NOTE E.

(PAGE 25)

"MINE ROAD." - The old Mine Road ran from Esopus to the Copper Mines in Pahaquarry. From Port Jervis south it was upon the Jersey side of the Delaware, and near the river. The Mahackamack, Minisink, Shapanack and Walpack Churches were all upon the line of this road. It is said that John Adams, while attending Congress, during its sittings in Philadelphia as late as 1800, passed down the Mine Road, as one of the most eligible routes from Boston to that city.

NOTE F.

(PAGE 27.)

The new Church edifice at Bushkill is sixty feet long (with tower projection and pulpit recess, seventy feet) and thirty-eight feet wide. The Building Committee until the inclosure of the house and the completion of the basement, were Henry M. Labar, Jno. M. Swartwood and P. J. Guillot. From August 20th, 1873, to the completion of the edifice, Jacob Nyce, William Schoonover and John Heller. The Contractor, from the inclosure to the completion of the building, was Edward Burch. Cost of edifice, \$5,359 95. The Corner stone was laid July 11th, 1872, by the Pastor, Rev. J. F. Shaw, when an address was delivered by Rev. S. J. Rogers, of Port Jervis. It was dedicated January 13th, 1874, when the Historical Discourse here published was preached in the morning by Rev. S. W. Mills, of Port Jervis. Rev. E. P. Rogers, D. D., of New York, preached the dedication sermon in the afternoon, from Ps. lxxxiv, 1, after which the form of dedication was read by the Pastor. Rev. J. H. Bertholf, of New York, preached in the evening. Rev. G. S. Garretson, Rev. W. E. Turner, Rev. C. E. Van Allen, and Rev. Mr. Meacham assisted at these different services, in the devotional exercises.















